The COMMONWEAL

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The Two Wars

THE STRUGGLE in which the American people find themselves locked this spring—the most gigantic struggle of all history—is twofold. The immediate task, the military combat against Hitler and Japan, is a race against time. The problem is to set up a winning strategy and to hold on to enough sources of strategic raw materials (and develop enough new sources) and to retain adequate potential bases for successful attacks. For America it is a problem of steeling a people to self-sacrifice and training vast armed forces and industrial personnel. THE COMMONWEAL does not pretend to have at its disposal a corps of military experts nor to have a great news service on fighting fronts. It is in carrying on the fight against oppression and totalitarianism itself that THE COMMONWEAL joins directly in the military phases of this war.

Much more active is the magazine's rôle in the other aspect of the conflict—the positive aims for the United States and all human society which are so closely linked with the military aspects of the struggle. The military might of the Axis must be stopped, but that success on the battlefield will not by itself insure a just and lasting peace. The broad principles and outlines of such a peace must built up concurrently with the establishment of military, naval and air supremacy if real victory is to be won. Such thorny questions as regional and international organizations, minorities, colonial peoples, markets and raw materials, disarmament and international police forces, etc., have to be thoroughly explored.

More specifically, however, the primary task of THE COMMONWEAL lies in the field of ideas. In a period of grim determination and concentrated national effort, when attention must necessarily be focused on efficiency at any hazard, the public tends to lose sight of the ultimate objectives. All eyes are on the immediate task. So it has been with the dictatorships for a much longer span of years. And partly by design, partly by the sheer necessity inherent in organizing for aggression or all-out defense, the individual citizen has fallen lower and lower in status until he becomes only a number, a cog in a national war machine, a creature deprived of his natural, human rights. Years of schooling in the dictatorships are bringing forth new generations indoctrinated with the belief that they exist only for the pleasure and the exigencies of the state. Human life has lost its value, the human being has lost his inviolability, he has lost his organic sense of relationship to his Creator and to his fellow-man.

The forces of dehumanization in Europe are more virulent and have been at it longer than they have over here. But there are many tendencies impelling Americans in a similar direction. And it is not only among such economic victims as sharecroppers, slum dwellers, rural and industrial migratory workers and the rest. American education is for the most part secularized and pragmatist. Under the stress of the war emergency already existent tendencies toward centralization of power, production, responsibility have increased by leaps and bounds. The conception of man which has developed from two thousand years of history and more is fading.

It is THE COMMONWEAL's high function to help keep this conception of man's nature, his rights and duties, his destiny, alive under the most harassed circumstances. That will be our principal contribution toward the peace. Actively assisting us in this vital task are many victims of the tyranny that threatens to engulf so large an area of the world. Our current collaborators include a large number of European scholars—Catholic and non-Catholic—who in spite of everything continue to bear witness to their belief in the tradition for which we once looked to so many European countries. Man must not lose sight of his true rôle. It is because we are dedicated to upholding this vital tradition that in times when so many appeals are made for other worthy causes, THE COMMONWEAL continues to campaign for the funds needed to carry on. The halfway mark is not far distant and we are confident that our readers will not let us down. Five hundred more $10 Associates are still needed to assure THE COMMONWEAL's continuance over the hard financial period the magazine enters with the spring.

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Laval

LAVAL has returned to power and we do not judge his intentions. Not improbably he is moved by the desire to serve his country. That does not matter. What matters is that he has been selected for office by the Germans and not by his compatriots. What matters is that he is bringing France back into the war and back into civil war. For if, as it is possible, he sees the future of his country only in a European new order dominated by a victorious Germany, the fact is that his compatriots do not accept such a premise for French policy. The fact is, also, that they believed, correctly we think, that Marshal Pétain did not accept such a premise and therefore will see, in Laval's appointment, a change in policy which they will not endorse.

The German pressure which brought him to power is in direct relation to the pressure which the French people brought to bear on Vichy to prevent active collaboration. In so far as we are concerned, this German pressure results not from a failure of American policy—our presence in Vichy—but from the relative success of that policy and from an intense desire to bring it to an end. The German pressure, increasing to its present severity, follows no lessening of the ties which bind the French people to ourselves but a growing awareness of the identity between our hopes and memories and their own. It is because the French people, in union with the American people, hope for German defeat, and because this hope too greatly has influenced the Vichy government, that the Germans have now acted to impose a new leadership upon the French people. But in imposing a man whose willingness to collaborate will appear to the French people as exceeding the inevitable, and consequently tolerable, minimum imposed by circumstance, German coercion ceases to be external—visibly, to all the French, it assumes a positive and identified presence in the French government.

Pan-Am.

THERE HAS always been a certain humanity and humility about the Maryknoll way of doing things which represents the very best there is in the Catholic missionary spirit. This is, of course, no monopoly of any single order of priests, but Maryknoll's achievement in these regards has become a tradition. On Easter Sunday Bishop James E. Walsh gave a farewell speech to the young priests who constitute his order's first group of missioners to Latin America. A few sentences of what he said could well serve as a motto for all the elaborate efforts now so much in vogue to effect a greater solidarity between the peoples of the two continents. "We expect to tell our people . . . that they have little to learn from our own country, so far as we know, except possibly to avoid some of its mistakes. . . . We will tell them that they have always possessed, at least in germ, the true ideals of the correct philosophy of life, and that we come, hoping to share this heritage with them. We could scarcely tell them anything else, since we go to them for the sole purpose of preaching the Catholic Faith. It may be that in so doing we shall reflect credit on our own country, for we believe that the spreading abroad of the spirit of Christ reflects credit on any country. If we are instrumental in bringing the two hemispheres closer together, it will be by that means and no other. We do not doubt that this same spirit of Christ makes a good meeting ground for the nations. Indeed we believe it is the best meeting ground, and we are even becoming convinced—as we view the sea of troubles that engulfs us—that it is the only true and solid meeting ground for the divided nations of the world." It is easy enough to say that such ideas are not practical, and yet no one could for a moment assert that they do not lead to action—the twenty young men who are setting out for Bolivia are certainly active far more than a thousand committees which may succeed in holding a thousand exhibitions of Latin American art, or in getting a thousand magazine articles printed. And it is difficult to believe that such a spirit of humility will not bear fruit.

District 50 Goes Rural

THE FORMATION of Free Farmers, Inc., blew off the perennially interesting problem of John L. Lewis. For some time Lewis has been conducting what commentators call a "war of nerves" in the labor movement, but no expert or labor leader has been willing to risk an opinion on what it is all about. The speculations and facts which have been published are numerous and fascinating, but cannot be summarized in our short space. They do force the conclusion, however, that the presently publicized advance of John L. Lewis's United Dairy Farmers Division of District 50 of the United Mine Workers is not important primarily as an agricultural phenomenon. The most important interest of the miners' new move centers rather around the labor, industry and government of the dominant, industrial, urban America.

But this week, the 57,282 dairy farmers of New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Vermont, Massachusetts and Connecticut who are in the New York metropolitan milk pool are in the newspaper spotlight. Many of their organizations, from progressive and useful ones to some doubtful and reactionary ones, formed this Free Farmers, Inc., in order to fight the organizing drive of the Dairy Farmers Union, recently come to life again in the bosom of the United Mine

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Workers. The Free Farmers' opening blasts contained strong language indeed about protection against "civil war, strike, riot, civil commotion or malicious damage"—none of which the bland District 50 was promising the farmers. The attack was leved against Lewis too for trying to "control the nation," and impose a "universal union shop." But how was the UMW able to get enough hold in the agricultural sphere to rouse such opposition? The war issue and the problem of proper relations between unions and government and the political parties lay in the general background which we have this week skipped over. Also, there was the plain issue of unionization, which Free Farmers appear to be against. But then it is possible that Lewis, perhaps in spite of himself, is crystallizing some deep and genuine agrarian issues.

Dairy farmers are more fully industrialized and coherent in their economy than farmers in general. If District 50 is now going strangely rustic, the farms have no less been going industrial. As farmers leave the homestead pattern, they find themselves at the bottom of the heap in the over-all commercial economy of business enterprise. At the present time, dairy farmers feel particularly that the prices for their products are more strictly controlled than those of manufactured goods. They have been feeling a labor pinch from migration and high defense wages. Federal farm appropriations and services have been cut in Washington. Constantly the few, enormous milk distributing companies are accused of taking too many cents from the food dollar and of preventing the growth of competing independent or cooperative processing plants and marketing systems. Agriculture is in the midst of a revolution, and is not determined where it can or where it wants to go. The dairy farmers are farther along than most. The rustic waters where Lewis has gone fishing this season are really troubled. It is unfortunately doubtful if they will be calmed soon by any genuine solution of this agrarian problem reached by this union activity, and it is doubtful if District 50 really thinks it has such a solution.

Our Women and the War

ON THE WHOLE, a commendably temperate spirit is shown in official utterances regarding the recruitment of woman power for war work. The term is used to cover not only those women who will be directly associated with fighting duty behind the lines—a relatively small number, which it is to be hoped can be kept at a minimum—but also the indefinitely great number who will necessarily perform duties, agricultural, industrial, clerical, to release men for active military service. The selection and training of this second group should be as careful, as gradual and as closely correlated with specific regional needs, as the emergency permits. Already we begin to have warnings—as from the American Association of Industrial Physicians—of the threat of present war work to the future generation. This group of medical men estimates that five million women —that is, "mothers and potential mothers"—may be doing such work by the end of this year, and presents a grave picture of the mounting incidence of disease and nerve collapse inevitable in many of them. This but underlines the need of going slowly and of picking the workers freest and fittest to do the jobs. The Administration's plan for voluntary registration of the forty-odd millions of our women between eighteen and sixty-five seems a sane enough expedient; it is not being rushed through. And there is related evidence of the intent to go slowly in the careful way the Federal Security Administrator and the Office of Agricultural Defense Relations are promising to handle the present recruitment of women laborers for farm and orchard work. These agencies recognize that the acute needs in these fields are and will be sharply localized, and can be met in considerable degree from local sources; and that many men are still available. The situation in agriculture is, by and large, that found in war industries also. In the State of New York, for example, there are only three thousand women now in training for such work, and this represents a doubling since December. Throughout the whole country, the Civil Aeronautics Authority reports to date only 50 women instructors. These numbers are bound to increase hugely within a year or so, of course, but the situation seems favorable on the whole for sane expansion and control.

What Comes After Defense?

By JOSEPH P. McMURRAY

ALL OF THE mass movements of men within this country can be defined broadly as either a flight from poverty or a quest for gold, literal or figurative. The depression decade spawned four million migrants who would not starve standing still. The lure of gold—defense jobs—has put another two million or more men, women and children on the road. Before another year is out the number will probably be doubled.

What will happen to this vast dislocated population when the nation returns to peace-time economy and the workers are cut adrift from the jobs that have given them temporary anchorage?

This is one of the questions the House Committee Investigating National Defense Migration (Tolan Committee) has sought to answer in hear-

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ings at pivotal defense centers throughout the country. At Washington a well-known newspaper columnist told the Committee: "We must look ahead to the day when the defense boom will be over and the wanderers will be in their trailers, their tourist camps, their hotels, their cheap rooms, but without the jobs which made their existence at least tolerable. Here is a perfectly predictable crisis. . . . It gives us warning now. It challenges our ability to plan."

From California to Connecticut the Committee has asked migrant war workers, "What will you do when your defense jobs end?"

"Go home, I reckon," is a stock answer.

But for many of the migrants there will be no home community to give them assistance until they find employment. After the war is over, many will wake to find themselves in a legal limbo of lost settlement rights: stateless as well as jobless.

For the man who takes to the road today carries with him the ball and chain of Elizabethan poor laws. All but two of our states have erected as protective barriers against migrants settlement laws that, like those of old England, deny public assistance to any except residents. To become a resident of some states requires five years (one state recently proposed enactment of a ten-year settlement law when the armament program brought hundreds of thousands of migrants into its borders); in other states a person may lose his settlement within thirty days after leaving, or even by declaring publicly that he intends to abandon his state of residence.

Thus, under the operation of these laws, it is not beyond the realm of possibility that from four to six million persons may find themselves without residence anywhere, having lost their status in their home states and not having gained it in the states to which they have moved. Not only will they be jobless, but in all probability penniless and without legal claim upon any state for public assistance. They will face unemployment entirely dependent upon the limited resources of private charity.

"I was on WPA off and on for two years back in West Virginia," a migrant pipefitter working on a defense job in Baltimore told the Committee. "I haven't a home or a family I could go to live with back there. I wouldn't want to go back anyway unless there was work."

But, as it was brought out at the hearing, if this migrant becomes jobless and penniless in Maryland, the authorities without doubt will deport him to West Virginia. In West Virginia his community may adopt the attitude that he left without intending to return and is therefore not a resident. The unfortunate migrant will then become a floater like countless others in this country. He will lose his homemaking habits and acquire the mental outlook of a vagabond.

Even should a migrant have retained settlement in his former community, to send him back there when he becomes stranded, as is customary, seems a most inequitable procedure. In all likelihood the home community is depressed, and was abandoned in the first place because it offered no promise to its workers. It has benefited not at all by the migrant's defense employment. Will it act as a generous parent when the prodigal son is shipped back home?

Recommendations

To avoid just such post-emergency problems the Committee has recommended to Congress an extension of the social security program to include a fourth category for general relief founded upon grants-in-aid to states. These grants would be extended only to those states that abolish settlement as a condition for giving relief. Under the new program every jobless indigent person residing within a state would share alike in general relief, regardless of his origin or former residence. No longer would archaic settlement laws add further jeopardy to lives that are too often hard and uncertain.

Affirming the Committee's plea for an extension of coverage under the social security program, a well-known economist had this to say at recent hearings in Michigan:

> I think a very definite shortcoming in this country is the fact that our system of general assistance does not have any federal assistance, either financial or in terms of supervision or administration or standards; and I believe, therefore, that we are taking a very definite risk in moving toward the post-defense period without examining to what extent we ought to provide, in addition to unemployment insurance, an underpinning structure that will take care of these people who are going to fall out at the end of 26 weeks or never fall into any of the 26 weeks at all, or who can't get into a works program for one reason or another. At the present time this is left entirely to the states and localities, to their own resources, to the best of their ability. I am certain they did not meet the problem adequately between 1935 and a year or so ago, and dire privation and destitution prevailed in many of our states where the only general relief available was Federal surplus commodities.

Even now, as well as in the future, a fourth category under the social security program, to include migrants, would act as an ameliorative measure. Today many defense communities, fearful of having to carry alone the burden of a stranded migrant population, have refused to expand their community facilities to provide for the newcomers. By keeping them on the edge of civic and social life they hope they will move on "afterward." "We don't like trailer camps," said the spokesman of a community that had opposed new housing developments for the migrants, "but we had rather have the camps than houses. Give 'em houses and they will stay on afterward as a problem."

Remove this fear on the part of the communi-

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ties by legislation that anticipates the end of the boom, and you go a long way toward providing the defense worker with the housing, the schools, the sanitary and recreational facilities he has a right to expect and without which he cannot release his fullest energies toward war production.

Increases needed

Along with setting up a fourth category, an increase in the benefit amount and the length of payment of unemployment insurance compensations would aid workers immeasurably in making the shift from war-time to peace-time employment. At present the average benefit under the unemployment insurance law is about $10 a week for 10 weeks a year. The highest paying state is California; the lowest South Carolina. Payments at present are made on the basis of earnings, rather than on length of employment. Thus is the low wage earner—the man whose need will be the greatest when unemployment comes—penalized. The post-war emergency demands a revision of these laws to meet the problems we will encounter then.

As a back-log for the period when industry must adjust itself to peace-time production, numerous authorities have suggested a public works program. This would take up the slack of unskilled workers left idle by retrenchment. Further, if the projects undertaken were of such nature as slum clearance, which tangibly improve the condition of the people, they would do much toward strengthening our domestic security.

Already many people are asking, as our national debt soars to unprecedented proportions, will the government be able to finance a public works program after the war? Just as it is true now, it will be true then: we cannot afford the luxury of a balanced budget. Just as we are spending billions now to provide tanks and guns, ships and planes for the safety and well-being of our people, so must we spend after the war to preserve the things we fought to defend.

A voluntary savings program has been suggested as another prop for the future. If every worker in the country had from $500 to $1,000 as a cushion against the inevitable shock of readjustment, a repetition of the thirties might be avoided. His willingness to participate in a savings program is manifest in the fact that in various defense plants, through his own organizations, he is putting away a certain amount each week.

Again and again it has been pointed out that this is no "silk shirt era." Such security as the people now enjoy has a hard-won quality. You find them paying off old debts. They live in trailer camps to avoid exorbitant rents. In one center, defense migrants have converted an old barn into a community house and take their recreation there instead of at taverns or theaters.

Although records show relatively little money being put into banks, the prevailing spirit of conservatism makes feasible a voluntary savings plan as a shock absorber later. Nation-wide participation could easily be popularized since it would be based upon an impulse deep-rooted in the American worker, a desire to be self-sustaining, to hoe his own row.

At the present time no method of saving should have stronger appeal to the war worker than the purchase of defense savings bonds and stamps. Whatever his income, here is something tangible he can buy with his money, knowing that in doing so, he not only looks to his own future but to the preservation of his country as well.

None of these plans—abolition of settlement laws, extension of the social security program, public works, or voluntary savings—offers a universal solvent. But knit into a comprehensive and elastic national program, each would contribute toward post-emergency security.

If we are to avoid the suffering and chaos of a depression decade, we must be ready with an answer before the last munitions factory is disassembled and the jobless workman asks, "What now?"

Who Will Rule Europe?

An analysis and a prognostic of her case.

***By* Valeriu Marcu**

AT THE end of this war the European soul will emerge more changed than European geography. The easy life of the *combinazione* has gone forever. A few months of reality has dispersed all the theories like clouds. No program of war aims, no orators, even were they better than Demosthenes, could have persuaded the peace loving, pre-war population of Norway, Denmark, France, Croatia, Rumania and Czechoslovakia that the routine and minor

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comforts of every-day life were not the highest good on earth. They would have scorned any prophet who told them: "You who are all-too-many, you who are superfluous, mind you, a time will come when politics will no longer mean horse trading and pull, *combinazione,* tips and the right to be pensioned. A time will come when politics will no longer mean the good offices of your local deputy to obtain a license for a *bureau de tabac* in France or a liquor store in Norway. A time will come when politics will simply mean: Kill or be killed!"

The foxes and hares have vanished. There are no more opportunities for horse trading. Instead of the plotters of *combinazione,* men with warlike instincts are arising. Today it is no longer Daladier or Laval who is popular, but an intrepid Colette. Europe has become a bad place for Philistines and pacifists. Under the impact of emotions never felt before by our generation, entire nations are praying for the success of their terrorists, and out of the depths of their suffering people are again beginning to say that war is the father of all things. In every occupied country Hitler has destroyed the old state, the old parties, the old unions, in order, so he has said, to save the world from bolshevism. But in every country he has occupied, a part of the labor that Lenin accomplished in Russia is now being done.

With his books under his arm, Lenin consciously destroyed the old state and everything it stood for. The same thing is now taking place in Europe without benefit of any doctrine, like a natural phenomenon. The experts of *combinazione,* Pétain, Laval, De Man, Quisling and Antonescu, are now cowering in the ruins of what were formerly state organizations. But neither the French nor the Norwegians nor the Dutch live in these states. These states are nothing but empty monstrosities guarded by German military and secret police. And the peoples who, under the leadership of the appeasers, were so shy about making war, felt that they were helpless before the German war machine, say today: "This is our war and because it is our war anything is justifiable." With all their available strength, in their dreams, in concentration camps, before the neighbor, when they blow up bridges or loosen railway tracks, they wage the total war from below against the total war from above. "Only in this light," a German friend, who has managed to escape to Switzerland, wrote me, "does the term 'total war' gain its full significance: combination of foreign war and civil war, both of them permanent."

One tenth of the contempt for death and the hard work they now display would have been sufficient to give a different face to the war in 1939-40. Only two years ago, 10 German motorcyclists were able to capture an entire French regiment, and some 1,000 Germans succeeded in occupying the beautiful city of Oslo as it lay sleeping in the dawn.

Why was it possible?

The war was nothing new

The war that came was, as always, a continuation of politics by other means, a continuation to the point of the grotesque. Even when the Germans reached the gates of Warsaw, the French were proud of not having died for Danzig—just as Déat had wished. They laboriously tried to wage war without shedding blood. To clear a minefield, they sent a herd of swine ahead of their troops. This was their offensive, their assistance to the Poles.

Among the many officers, including some of the highest rank, to whom I spoke during the war, I found four opinions represented: some declared sharply and tersely that victory over the Germans was impossible; others hoped for a compromise; still others for a revolution in Germany, which would relieve them of their task; others hoped for a miracle.

In this kind of warfare was expressed the whole policy of Europe's sham democracy—that horse trading mentality for which the Italians have the word *combinazione.* This shallow cunning which, since 1924, had pervaded not only political circles but entire classes of the population, is based on the assumption that there are no obstacles that need taking by frontal assault, that all obstacles can somehow be circumvented. Entire classes of society before they even thought of buying peace from Hitler bought peace and the domestic *status quo* from each other. People clung to the belief that it was always possible to maintain their positions of power by mutual concessions. The politician who best knew how to bribe the enemy was regarded as the leader.

Machiavelli says that in politics one must be fox or lion according to the circumstances; the democratic politicians were only foxes. The anti-Hitler fronts, both internal and external, were led by foxes, if not by rabbits. The crisis of the democracies was one of character and spirit.

Those who knew the German Reichstag before Hitler, or the Italian Parliament before Mussolini, will never forget the lamentable picture they presented. Communists, socialists and republican foxes put their heads together and calculated with the pencils so abundantly supplied by the parliaments that the dictators would be unable to achieve power because they were 20 or 50 votes short of a majority. Exhibiting the same parliamentary cretinism, politicians in Paris or London calculated that Hitler could not possibly win the war. With blue pencils in hand they calculated—very correctly—that they had 50 times more oil, 60 times more wool, 100 times more gold than the nazis.

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Revolution in war

That revolutionary methods of warfare can overcome all that, that shortages, once the fight has broken out, imperatively point out the direction of the attack, that a young generation faces death most courageously, most easily, most resolutely when young generals tell them: Look, there are the riches of the world. Let us break through and take them!—all this, the ABC of warfare, this appetite, which in itself is healthy—the pencil careerists, the statisticians, the party tacticians, the learned illiterates, the professors, the foxes and the hares did not understand. Nor did the peoples themselves understand it.

At the same time the National Socialists drank toasts to victory, laughed and celebrated their future murders.

"We shall be victorious," Goebbels said in a Bohemian gathering. "Because we know how to kill. Because we do it with pleasure, with resolution; because we long to do it."

Count Helldorf, later chief of police in Berlin and Potsdam, agreed: "Yes, killing is today a forgotten and discredited human and political virtue. With 'Kill Heartily' as the clear-ringing motto in our hearts we shall destroy the weak Weimar Republic and those pedantic cabinets in London and Paris which really belong in the eighteenth century."

Voluntary, hearty killing is rapidly ceasing to be a privilege of the National Socialist warriors. The nazis have preached and put into practice murder and the "dangerous life." But it was easy for them. For the army and the police supported them. Murder and "revolution" were, so to speak, directed by the police. Their heroism was a sham heroism, they were snobs of heroism. Just as the cultural and spiritual snobs used to stuff their empty phrases with quotations from world literature, so the nazis have been the snobs of the revolver with the safety catch released.

But today tens of thousands live the dangerous life without the protection of armies or police. Today there is real self-sacrifice and heroism. Today men have risen whom Hitler will never conquer.

The new Europe which is now springing up from a tragedy without parallel will not be ruled by the armies of occupation.

In his memoirs, General Allen, commander of the American troops stationed in the Rhineland in 1919, gives a good idea of the difficulties attending every occupation of a foreign country. And he spoke of only one province.

To the emigrés

Nor will Europe be ruled by the emigrés scattered on all continents. This would be to proclaim yesterday, if not the nineteenth century, as today, as our own century. This would reduce the European revolution to a mere change of cabinet. It was not Hitler who robbed the 1939 emigrés of their intelligence, any more than Lenin robbed those of 1917 of theirs. They cannot be intelligent, for their leaders are mostly *combinazione* leaders.

Let us take a typical example. Shortly after Hitler's accession to power, I was received by a French Minister who is today in exile and who like many others wants to succeed Pétain. He was one of Daladier's most trusted advisers. He complacently shook hands with me and asked me to tell him about Germany. I told him what every thirteen year old boy in Germany knew: that war was coming—and war not against the moon, but against France. I said that the Prussian-German army could not forget the defeat of 1918.

"Revenge against us," the Minister interrupted me in a tone of annoyance, "cannot be the goal of National Socialism. If Hitler goes to war, all Europe will not suffice him as a prize."

"You are right," I said, "but you will be the first step."

"No, we are going to appease him, and we shall negotiate with sincerity and, if necessary, with cunning, but in any case with a will to succeed."

"That won't help you," I replied; "no matter what you give him he will value it only if he massacres you in addition. He won't tolerate another army on the continent, particularly an army which beats the Germans not by its own strength but with foreign help. Nor can you remain in the no man's land of neutrality during a world conflict."

At that point the Minister lost both his natural friendliness and acquired good manners and began to rage, not against Hitler, but against me and the like of me.

"What you want," he cried, "is to incite us to war. I can understand that you, an emigré, should wish to avenge your sufferings by a little world war. But we are weak. And even if we were strong, we still could not send an army corps to Berlin every time some liberal is thrown out. Excuse my sharp language, but I must convince you. Hitler must be willing to stop somewhere, and all the art of our diplomacy should consist in finding out this point of safety. You must realize that in the last world war our manhood was decimated. Even if we win this time, a new war would cost us from two to three million casualties, which would leave us without men. We are 40 million, the Germans are 80 million. We are not multiplying at all, while they multiply like hygienically supervised rabbits. To us, peace, negotiations, appeasement spell the only possibility of survival."

Every word he spoke gave voice to his ardent will for peace. He expressed the whole policy of comfort which prevailed in all strata of society,

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and not only in France. It was from their fear of death that this longing for tranquillity, this renunciation of life was born.

Against comfort-at-any-price

The uprising of the new generation is directed both against nazism and against the spirit of horse trading. The emigrés are outside the experience of the present revolt, they have not yet understood it. In vain do they parade their ex-ministerial titles, withered like the laurels of dead stage stars. The new ruling class, the new "people of rulers," is being formed from all classes and professions. The process that in other epochs took decades or years is now being consummated in a few months. It is revolutionary by its very speed. These rapid changes are giving rise to new life, new energies, new strength springing forth from the soul of the people, from the remotest past, from their deep faith in religion. We are witnessing the birth of religious wars for freedom. The *tabula rasa,* resulting from Hitler's destruction of the old governments, the old military and political bureaucracies, the old material values and property relations, will enable the new élite to rise, and among these new men every soldier carries a marshal's baton in his bag.

They will come from the Comitadjis in the mountains of Macedonia, the students in Leyden and Amsterdam, the railroad workers in France, the terrorists in Serbia and those Germans who are learning the meaning of Hitler's Reich in prison cells and concentration camps. To deny the oppressed Germans equal rights, to ignore their courage, is to renounce the destruction of Hitler. These Germans are in the most difficult position. There are far more obstacles to their offensive than to any British offensive against Hitler.

To be sure those people have no definite program. But their tendencies—so I was told by a friend who recently escaped from one of the occupied countries to Switzerland—recall Jefferson's ideas of decentralized government. "Our chief aim," he wrote me, "is the dissolution of the centralized authoritarian State and its replacement by a free association of communities. This would be the first counter-offensive of the individual after the century-old offensive of State power. Possibly such associations will embrace all conceivable human types: from the flaming, romantic revolutionary to the type who sees the original cell of a future order of society in a trade union. The economic question, important as it may be, does not preoccupy these fighters at present; they will accept any economic régime if it guarantees their personal freedom."

Beyond a doubt new, terroristic, warlike elements and not figures from the political antique shop will be the next rulers. In January, 1942, a thing happened which was certainly unexpected to many people: the leader of the Serbian resistance against the Germans was appointed war minister by the government-in-exile in London. The government-in-exile needs this new war minister more than he needs them. Soon the Poles, Czechs and others will follow this example.

A European type of anti-Hitler fighter is in the process of formation. The psychology of this new type is unintelligible to conformist thinking. He is a conspirator today, but a ruler tomorrow. His path to power traverses the prison cell, not the corridor of parliament.

It may be true that oppression has never been bloodier than today; but it is also true that no war was less "national" than Hitler's. The first nation captured by Hitler was Germany. Have we not seen National Socialist Frenchmen who contributed to the present lawlessness as much as Hitler? Is not the gang (certain conservatives excepted) which, in the darkness of the defeat, equipped with false keys and felt slippers furnished by the Gestapo, stole power and installed themselves as the Vichy government, equal in ignominy to Himmler and Goering? And the Hungarian, Italian, Rumanian and Bulgarian gentlemen who have handed over their peoples to Hitler, are they made of a different stuff from the nazis?

And all the Quislings who were formerly Hitler's greatest asset are today becoming a liability. Today, the Quislings are only a ferment of civil war, they crystallize the hatred of Germany in the oppressed populations. They color the life and death struggle with a bloody, passionate overtone. All the old accounts are being settled now, just as in a civil war.

Only one thing can still postpone Hitler's defeat, only one thing can renew his military strength: political mistakes of the coalition fighting against him. But even this will not save him. The struggle has become too deep, gushing from the bowels of the earth and the innermost depths of the human soul. Europe, this boiling pot of races, is even now beginning to vomit up nazism from its mouth like nauseating bile.

(Editors' Note. C. G. Paulding will continue this discussion in the next issue.)

The Assassin

A wild fern beat him down, and a petal
Of a wood-rose, after smoke and metal
Passed him by. It was so brief:
His face withered to grief
So swiftly, and recovered—Who could know
A scent had lashed him to his final throe?

They wondered what light woman, or what price
Had put him down to death's device . . .
He who was judased by his mother's hand
That led him laughing, once, through pasture land.

JOSEPH CHERWINSKI.

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Chorister's Progress

Reminiscences of days gone by and in a simpler world.

***By* an Ex-Chorister**

WHEN FIRST I began showing leanings toward music, my apprehensive parents put the blame on my deceased maternal grandfather. This model of immigrant self-reliance and adaptiveness, soon after arriving here, acquired a tinker's portable furnace and made Dutchtown melodious with his resounding "Tinware to mend." Aside from this, he gratified some inner craving, and earned a few extra "shillings," by playing the clarinet at social gatherings in local taverns at night. My anxious parents encouraged me when, at an early age, I sublimated my vocal inheritance by draping a shawl about me and intoning the Mass chants, but carefully isolated me from the frivolous clarinet. By the way, both my grandchildren play the clarinet, or *piobin,* as Grandma gaily and gaelically terms it.

My earliest recollection goes back to my second or third year. My ever-so-young mother, when in a teasing mood, would sing a mournful German parody on *'Tis the Last Rose of Summer* beginning with "My last trousers, must to the pawnshop." The sad fate of that *Letzte Hose* was always my undoing and sent me howling miserably under the table. My next memory, at five, has me sitting, well-muffled, in the draughty backyard, singing, accompanied by my accordion, for the amused neighbors, who threw me pennies. This was the only occasion that I was ever recompensed in cash for my musical labors.

After several years serving as altar-boy and enjoying the lively Mass music by Farmer or Concone coming from the choir-end of the church, I was drafted into the children's choir of boys and girls. The harried organist did not attempt to teach us the theory of music. What with the adult choir to train, his parochial school work with four grades at once (and giving private music lessons to eke out a living for his wife and eleven children), he had no energy left for such frills; we were just expected to sing the chants loudly. Particularly was there no thought of bringing out the soft treble tones hidden in boys' throats. I am certain that both parents and boys would have objected to such sissifying methods. As to remuneration, nothing so fantastic ever occurred to anyone. Once an elderly curate discovered that we did not even get to the usual outing, which so distressed him that, next day, he presented each one of us with a little paper bag of dried prunes. To a baker's son, like myself, who had free access to all sorts of fruits, dried or fresh, this was far from being a treat, but the well-meant donation from a meagre purse I have since more justly appraised. *Requiescat in pace.*

As I remember it, this period came to an end when the organist was obliged, during Mass, to leave his bench to get some sheet music. I could not resist touching one of the organ keys nearest to me, and it happened to be a fine deep one. At the booming sound, the agitated organist came storming from the rear and presented me with one of his ear-warmers before all the boys and girls, not needing to ask who was the perpetrator. My right ear burned right up to the *Ite missa est* and my answering *Deo Gratias* was fervent and convincing.

There followed an interlude during which I was relegated to the rear of the choir-loft as "organ-pumper," a calling now as obsolete as that of "lamp-lighter." Besides strength and endurance, it required judgment and singlemindedness. The strokes with the protruding pump-handle had to be long and steady. An anxious eye had to be kept on a little dingus that slid up and down in a groove to indicate the amount of air stored in the bellows inside the organ; there was a danger-mark beyond which it was fatal to go. One had to be particularly alert on Christmas and Easter, when thundering, air-consuming recessionals were played. Surely, nothing could be more of an anti-climax than to have the air give out just before the tense, pawing and trampling organist reached the final, all-out chord. The mere thought is fraught with panic and exhaustion!

Change of voice

After a distressing interval of soprano squeaks and baritone squawks, "the voice," meaning mine, turned out to be just one of those border-line bassos of which choirs are full. Still, through the passing years and by dint of much rocking in the deep and ding-donging in the light-house tower, it developed into a tolerably serviceable one, sometimes used for solo work, but more often to drag along the less experienced and more diffident singers. "Sing good and loud, John."

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One needs to sing both loudly and stridently to be heard above the terrific organ accompaniment sometimes given to chorus singing. A power-mad organist who can turn on the thunders of Jove with the flick of his little finger is to be shunned. And unfortunately few choirs can sing unaccompanied music well. The effort with most of them to sing a dozen bars *a capella* usually ends in a wild scramble of organ modulations to bring them back to pitch. And then the usual popular Mass, with its thin inconsequence, does not lend itself to *a capella* singing; it must distract attention from itself by goat-like instrumental caperings.

I remember that some of us believed that drinking beer lowered the bass voices, while wine was more serviceable for tenors. Oh yes, husky sounding tenors were classified as "whiskey tenors." By the way, why do so many very low voices seem to come from Russia? After all, perhaps vodka. . . . Well, science should make some researches and find the lacking hormone. Now and then a naturally deep voice, but untrained, joins a choir. I once sang next to such an one; he rarely sang his own bass part, but went along blithely in unison with one of the other parts, several octaves lower. The organist seemed rather pleased to have his voice section equipped with an octave-coupler.

To resume, I became a choir-member at seventeen in a newly formed parish out in the cabbage patches. I suspect that the matter was cooked up between my mother and the soprano while the latter was making her usual matutinal purchase of rolls and buns at our bakery; I would have been too diffident to essay it myself. The first rehearsal was held at her home and "the voice" tried out for classification.

Music, both profane and sacred, now became of absorbing interest. For the former I frequented the vocal and instrumental park-concerts, and the latter impelled me to haunt distant churches for Sunday evening services, provided they had large and well-trained choirs. In those days people had more leisure for Sunday evening vespers, and on feast days these were practically sacred concerts. Father, noting my curious penchant for church-going, voiced doubts as to any real piety being involved, but Mother persuaded him that I might do worse, even though I did make a sort of sanctified sport out of it. A "figured" Vespers was a high point of inappropriateness, but much admired. The music was florid and operatic, studded with solos, duos and trios, but the flagrant omissions and repetitions so mutilated the beautiful text of the psalms that the faithful could not possibly follow it and few tried. Aside from Vespers, frivolous Masses by Wiegand or Marzo, Guilmant or Mercadante, Mozart or Haydn were our ambition. For offertories and incidental music the gamut of bad taste ran from operatic selections provided with sacred words to an unbelievable, but authenticated, brass-band rendition of Tararara-Boom-De-Ay at the most solemn part of a Mass.

Even the good nuns delighted occasionally in a disguised *Old Oaken Bucket* at the children's Mass. Let us hope that the All-Knowing looked down as indulgently as did the Madonna when the Juggler of Notre Dame trustingly offered up his little act before her statue. Stationed as we were, detached from both chancel and congregation, at the farther end of a long nave, some of us probably nursed a sense of greater importance than befitted us. Not understanding the beauty of its simplicity and suitability, we may have deemed the ancient chants of the Church crude, even tribal, compared to our more exciting, modern harmonizations. However, attendance at a performance of Gounod's *Faust* once gave me some food for thought. Amid all the color, movement and welter of rich harmonies, the classic Eames as Marguerite seated herself quietly at her spinning wheel and softly intoned the "King of Thule" aria. To the hushed audience it was like a fresh breeze from the spring of the world blowing away all stress and artificiality, filling our souls with a pristine innocence. And all accomplished by using one of the old liturgical modes.

A choirmaster

After twenty years of city choirs, a young and growing family decreed the life suburban. By that time I knew many Masses and could play the melodeon. Although compelled to take business trips, I was soon drafted as volunteer organist of the village church and so became more deeply involved in choir-work than ever.

During this period my conception of what was desirable in a church service by no means remained static; for instance, I looked forward to an out-and-out male choir. After reading up on the training of boys' voices—and the sweet piping of these fledglings is a poignant experience—I started drilling the half-dozen or so I could muster, with an afternoon Vesper service in mind as a beginning. We actually got as far as chanting Vespers several times, but it must have been irksome to a generation given to taking a siesta and reading the voluminous Sunday newspapers after a heavy midday dinner. A minstrel show given by the men's society captured the boys as co-artists, and for several months my carefully nurtured system of training was shattered by their lusty and, I must say, delighted shouting of popular airs. Another time, I determinedly provided a dozen copies of the Mass Propers for the year, in plain chant, for the adult singers, but never got so far as using them. Also I campaigned for a pipe organ for which I would have had to prepare myself, never having used pedals before. On

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business trips I managed to crowd in several hours of pedal practice on a Y.M.C.A. organ at so much per hour.

In short, I was somewhat of a gad-fly to this country parish and kindly pastor, with my nervous energy and ambitious plans. Sometimes it was hard to tell which was dog and which was tail between my vocation and my avocation, but I was happy in this extension of mental and physical potentialities. Country air, village friends, outdoor chores were good for all of us and I experienced a fierce satisfaction in being able to discharge my parochial obligations in this way through the choir-work.

Business and other contingencies forced me to center my family life in two widely separated cities during the next quarter century. From the viewpoint of a chorister's progress, these twenty-five years were a total loss. Mentally, I had moved beyond the prevailing standard of church-music, but actually there was no opportunity to study or practice along the lines of my newly emerging proclivities and so, from force of habit, I kept on in a duty which became more and more distasteful, singing the same sentimentalities and pretentious inanities. When from misuse "the voice" gave out, I was rather glad of it and, for years wild horses could not drag me to a High Mass.

And yet now I seldom miss High Mass; I enjoy it immensely both from an esthetic and a devotional standpoint. In my present parish we *assist* at High Mass and not only *attend* it. Visitors are astonished to see how closely we follow the Mass with our missal pamphlets. We chant the *Asperges* and the *Credo* besides all of the responses, and how natural this colloquy between priest and people in musical language! Even a crack-voiced ex-choirlofter may join in circumspectly under cover of the congregational singing.

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT'S request for some simple, popular and comprehensive title for the present world war may not directly result in the selection of such a title, yet as thousands of minds turn over the subject, and it is discussed in countless editorials and radio talks, we shall probably reach a general agreement, sooner or later. That is, we shall do so provided we remain unconquered from without, and safe from revolution from within, and are permitted to proceed with our more or less normal course of national development. It is the latter danger, that of revolution within, linking up with world revolution outside, which is our chief peril. That we have the power, both physical and moral, to defeat our open enemies in the field of battle, in the long run, in spite of all heavy losses, can scarcely be doubted, always provided we maintain national unity. But there are items of news appearing daily which are more ominous of possible disaster than all the war news from abroad.

Consider the implications of such a paragraph as the following one, which leads a long news article in the New York *Times* of April 13: "Fearful that John L. Lewis's campaign to organize dairy farmers will create civil war in the New York milkshed, the most powerful farm organizations in New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania and Vermont have formed a coalition to fight the Lewis drive and to safeguard their members against any financial loss that might be sustained through the burning of barns, the poisoning of cows or other forms of vandalism by union agents."

The anti-Lewis group professes to believe that the labor leader who was mainly instrumental in creating the CIO is now "seeking to obtain control of the nation's food supply as a means of elevating himself to dictatorial power." Mr. Lewis's friends, or at least his spokesmen in the new union he has formed to organize the farmers, ridicule the opposition movement as an effort "to create a bogeyman for the purpose of discrediting the union." In Wisconsin, the CIO executive board has declared that the Lewis attempt to organize and direct the dairy farmers had "nothing in common with the principles of the CIO." The latter organization, so the board continued, is dedicated enthusiastically to the winning of victory in the war, whereas the Lewis drive, so the ominous charge emphasizes, "is connected with the policy of isolationism, appeasement and confusion to defeat the war effort."

It is the last accusation that gives the Lewis movement its most sinister hue, and this is far from the first time that such a charge has been made against the powerful leader of the miners who a few years ago threatened to become a sort of labor dictator whose sway was rapidly extending far beyond the ordinary lines of union activity. It was on the rock of open opposition to President Roosevelt, mainly over the issues of foreign policy, that Mr. Lewis's growing political ambitions were at least temporarily wrecked. Are they reviving? There are many keen observers in Washington and elsewhere, many close observers of the complicated relations of labor movements and personal power politics, who are convinced that John L. Lewis is on his way to greater heights of political power than ever before, and that now he will be aided by many forces which years ago were fighting him tooth and nail.

The writer is not one of those commentators who can claim any personal inside knowledge of the conditions and persons which in combination may amount to a serious danger to our national unity; nevertheless, in this Lewis affair, as in many other circumstances now developing, he believes that there may be discerned the same signs of internal revolution that were so frightfully apparent in France before that unhappy nation was betrayed. The Lewis movement among the dairy farmers does not look like a genuine extension of honest labor unionization. It grimly resembles an organized effort to interfere with our national unity on the part of men bitterly opposed to the present Administration.

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Communications

SOCIAL JUSTICE

Tulsa, Okla.

TO the Editors: I line up with Michael Williams about the poison-pen press in this life-and-death struggle.

This is the time to get tough with these gentry. THE COMMONWEAL is too, too polite. There is more than a trace of mawkish sentimentality in what you say about "Social Justice."

The "sweet reasonableness" you show is out of place. Now is the time when I ache for the old-fashioned editors who threw off coat and vest, let down their suspenders and wrote pieces with fighting words in them.

Intellectual fastidiousness was not meant for times like these. You've got to be rude.

Be rude and I'll like you much better. Besides, rudeness is a wonderful stimulus to circulation.

EDWARD A. BRANIFF.

DERNIÈRE CLASSE

Sarasota, Florida.

TO the Editors: What a privilege to take a First Aid course such as that described by Edward Skillin, Jr., in the April 10 issue of THE COMMONWEAL. It is more of a privilege to read the description—thanks for the best laugh I have had in many a day.

Mass production being the order of the day, I joined a class for mass production of First Aids. Thirty-eight women and two men met in a local schoolroom for our first lessons. The scramble for the few large chairs—where kindergarten stools and miniature benches prevailed—almost brought about "working conditions." A solemn soul, our instructor—neither nurse nor M. D.—who read for an hour from the text book—so we might take notes—13,000,000 copies are not sufficient for an eager people. Alas, we arrived at the all important question of "Pressure Points" to stop bleeding. The class was told to spend, and did spend, the second hour punching, digging, pressing and clutching at each other's necks, heads, etc. Was it possible the twenty hours of instruction was to be like this? (No wonder the "Doc" added the chapter on hernia.)

I think my expression might have suggested the ditty, "Lady, let me die in peace," because a young woman on my left leaned over and inquired if I knew how much longer the "Wave of Pressure" was to continue. We concluded we were either very dumb or our I.Q. very high—in justifying our desire to advance to the subject of tourniquets.

A rap on our teacher's desk brought a challenge to go to a certain store, purchase a certain kind of muslin, a certain width—bring a blanket and wear "slacks" (I weigh 200 pounds and realize it is best not to wear them) at the next meeting. Class dismissed.

My neighbor and I decided to seek another class and we hope we may have such good company as "Doc," stogies and all.

FLORENCE MCCURDY.

The Stage & Screen

The Moon Is Down

LIKE "Of Mice and Men," "The Moon Is Down" is a virtually word-for-word transcript by John Steinbeck of his own short novel of the same title. The stage version of "Of Mice and Men" was more effective than the fiction version. The reverse, it seems to me, is true of "The Moon Is Down." For this, the casting and direction are considerably to blame. But it goes deeper than that. The core of "Of Mice and Men" was emotion, arising directly out of action. The core of "The Moon Is Down" is aspiration, arising chiefly out of rhetoric. The former is dramatic method; the latter, literary.

Judging from the enormous popularity of the fiction version, the theme of "The Moon Is Down" must be already familiar to most readers of this column. A totalitarian invasion unit takes over by surprise, with the connivance of a local traitor, a small democratic mining town. In the interest of universality, Steinbeck doesn't specify nationalities, but clearly hints that the invaders are nazis and the democrats Norwegians. The invaders hope to consolidate their conquest and avoid bloodshed through collaboration; the Mayor temporizes, waiting to discover the people's will. Gradually that will asserts itself in underground resistance of mounting violence. The invaders learn that "herd men" may momentarily dominate but cannot conquer free men.

I don't intend to enter the controversy regarding the expediency of Steinbeck's message. The propagandists object that Steinbeck's long view of the power of democracy makes for complacency, blinds us to the need for immediate decisive aggression. I delegate this complaint to Mr. Archibald MacLeish. It is also objected that Steinbeck's totalitarians aren't sufficiently villainous. I object to the motive of this complaint, but it touches the play's chief dramatic defect.

Steinbeck's thesis postulates a conflict between "free men" and "herd men." And yet the herd man is never adequately represented. Only one minor character is truly a herd man, and him his own fellows ridicule. The chief nazi (or whatever Steinbeck chooses to call them), the commanding Colonel, is reasonable, self-deprecatory, cynical. I don't say that a totalitarian colonel might not be so, but as such he is an insufficient symbol of what Steinbeck meant to attack. His reasonableness and cynicism preclude dramatic conflict. It might have become a dramatic situation if this officer had been introduced flushed with victorious confidence and crusading zeal, and been gradually broken down, as several of his subordinates are, by underground resistance which retaliatory violence only aggravates; but instead of this, he reveals in his first scene that an experience in Belgium twenty-five years ago, before Hitler was invented, had already sided him with Steinbeck.

Is it, then, the author's message that the totalitarian method is not sympathetic even to its followers? But if

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there are, when we probe them sympathetically, no herd men, what is the point in proving that free men cannot be conquered by herd men? One face of Steinbeck's message would appear to be high-minded tolerance; the other face equates heroism with sabotage and, in one case, the cold-blooded murder of a homesick boy by a lonely young widow.

To avoid melodrama, Steinbeck has located all physical action off stage. And his dialogue is for the most part studiously anti-heroic. When I spoke above of his rhetoric, I didn't mean the sort of purple bombast that word often connotes. Understatement is no less a device of rhetoric than overstatement. The direction aims at the same anti-heroic tone, but the device is more effective on the printed page. As I have indicated, the casting of the leading rôles is not happy. Otto Kruger's Colonel Lenser is military in dress only; his qualities and mannerisms are those of a reserved, cultivated Englishman. So small a matter as a crisper accent might have vivified the whole play. I can't think of a better comment on Ralph Morgan's performance as the local Mayor than the remark of a young lady sitting behind me when at the end he was led off to be executed: "Isn't he *cute*?" *(At the Martin Beck.)*

The Circus

I DIDN'T see the Circus last year. The blue and red sawdust put me off. Circuses, of all things, shouldn't be streamlined by Norman Bel Geddes.

But I was wrong. Norman Bel Geddes's circus is all the circus used to be and immeasurably more. Color, lighting and costuming have given it an entirely new dimension. When I arrived, the wild animal acts were in progress. Baroque lacquer-red cages enclosed the white center-ring and the blue end-rings, inside the red track. And inside the cages, the lithe barbaric splendor of the great cats. It was a spectacle of breath-taking beauty which somehow managed, for all its stupendous scale, to suggest the magic intimacy of a child's dream.

Display No. 2: Internationally Renowned Artists in Amazing Aerial Feats. Display No. 3: Equestrian Achievement Extraordinary. Display No. 4: "Holidays"—A Radiant New Spectacle of Color, Beauty, Joy and Laughter—the amazing part is that none of this is overstatement. Fifty elephants in pink ballet skirts dance a George Balanchine ballet to Stravinsky music. Phosphorescent acrobats somersault between trapezes in a midnight-purple sky. The Greatest Juggler of All Time; clowns five stories high; sea-lions balancing on one another's flippers; horses dancing the conga; forward somersaults on the tightwire—it's all there, speeding your pulse and stopping your breath and tickling your ribs; brilliantly staged by John Murray Anderson; gloriously costumed; superbly executed. Ringling Bros. Barnum & Bailey's Circus is still the Greatest Show on Earth. *(At the Madison Square Garden.)*

Mary Louise Hickey

MONOLOGUISTS generally confine themselves to character sketches, chiefly satiric, occasionally pathetic. Last Sunday at the Blackfriar's Theater, Mary Louise Hickey led off with an entertaining group of these of which I enjoyed most her Helen Hokinson-ish portrait of a British amateur ambulance-driver visiting, by request—of her fellow-countrymen—this country. These revealed Miss Hickey as a versatile mimic.

"Joan of Arc," which followed, revealed a wider talent. In this, an "original solo-drama in six episodes," Miss Hickey gave us, entirely unassisted except by off-stage music, a capsule biography of the Maid of Orleans. We watched the awkward young farm girl, troubled by mysterious voices which she dared not avow for fear of ridicule, transform into a triumphant warrior; then a friendless prisoner, bewildered by human treachery and by the desertion of her voices; then finally once again triumphant in martyrdom.

The Blackfriars' next production will be the world première of "Savonarola" by Urban Nagle, opening April 23 for a limited run. DAVID BURNHAM.

Hairy-Fist-and-Roses School

ONE of cinema's favorite heroes is the hard-boiled guy, the bad man type who acts and speaks plenty tough with the boys, but who is really a softie at heart and is likely to be a pushover for a dame, a kid or a sentimental idea. This week gives us several lovely examples of these heart-of-gold mushy toughies.

If you like Damon Runyon's stories, *"Butch Minds the Baby"* is made for you. The screenplay by Leonard Spigelgass has caught well Runyon's version of Broadwayese. Albert S. Rogell's direction has the full Runyon flavor. And Brod Crawford, in the lead, is a natural—and I don't mean somewhat. He looks like one of Runyon's big, tough, sentimental guys and he talks the Runyon dialect, using that historical present tense as if he actually wrote the stuff himself. Now, Butch is a parolee who has to watch his step because he's been sent up three times and, according to the Baumes law, the fourth time gets a life sentence. Officer Devlin (Dick Foran) helps Butch find a job as a janitor. That's only the beginning of Butch's troubles, for Butch takes to minding Susie's baby. Susie (Virginia Bruce) is the doll he saved from suicide. Further woe is caused when an Italian tenant must have a goat for Easter. So hard-boiled Butch steals the goat, but tender hearted Butch can't kill it. Butch gets into worse predicaments because he pals around with several no good characters and because he thinks Devlin would make a good husband for Susie and a first rate father for Mike. The story goes soft but it has some swell satirical touches. Runyon's people won't bore you with their situations and wit. When Butch takes Baby along on a little job, Harry the Horse asks, "What is this—a burglary or a nursery?" But Baby Mike will melt your heart, and the scenes between Butch and Mike will make it run right down the aisles. Yes, sir, Brod Crawford is an amazing Butchy Wutchy.

"A Gentleman After Dark" could have been a good example of the tough-soft stuff too—but not with the impossible script that Patterson McNutt and George Bruce wrote from Richard Washburn Child's story, "A Whiff of Heliotrope." It lacks any semblance of

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reality and is practically without humor. Even Brian Donlevy, who seldom gives a bad performance, cannot bring conviction to the rôle of the gentleman-crook who wears a sprig of heliotrope to give him a lift. The film creeps along in a dated style until it comes to the big scene in which Heliotrope Harry confronts his faithless wife (Miriam Hopkins) and the informer (Philip Reed) who tried to get rid of him. After that touch of old-school melodrama the story wallows in devoted father stuff until the next big scene that tries to pull at your heart strings. Harry gives himself up to his close friend the detective (Preston Foster), when this dick promises to raise Harry's little daughter. Then of course there's the climax in which Harry breaks jail to dispose of his wife who is claiming her daughter. Director Edwin L. Marin did little to make the story plausible. There wasn't much he could do except let Donlevy exhibit the big heart that beat beneath his tough, dishonest bosom.

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Books of the Week

Development of Russian Culture

Outlines of Russian Culture. Paul Miliukov. Pennsylvania. 3 Volumes. $5.00.

AN OUTSTANDING WORK devoted to the cultural history of Russia has been recently published in America under the title of "Outlines of Russian Culture."[1] Its author, Professor Paul Miliukov, is an eminent scholar and statesman, who was leader of the constitutional opposition during the last years of the Czarist régime, and Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Provisional Government of 1917.

The three volumes, edited by another Russian scholar, Professor Karpovitch of Harvard University, contain an authorized abridged version of one of Mr. Miliukov's most famous works. They present a remarkable picture of the growth and various phases of Russian culture, beginning with the early Christian pre-Mongol period, then leading us through the dark ages of the Mongol invasion to the fourteenth century, which marked the dawn of liberation from the Asiatic conqueror and the primary stage of the building up of the Moscow Empire. It further shows us the gradual establishment of the Russian medieval state with its peculiarly rigid structure, and only a few centuries later the birth of modern Westernized Russia, with its intensive development, from Peter the Great to our days. The closing chapters in each volume are devoted to culture under the Soviet

[1] Edited by Professor Michael Karpovitch. Translated by Valentine Ughat and Eleanor Davis. It is from Volume II of his great historical study, part of which has been published in Russian (Paris, 1930-37), that Professor Karpovitch has selected for translation abridged sections dealing with the development of religion, literature and art in Russia. The English manuscript has been gone over and approved by the author himself. Professor Miliukov, aged eighty-two, lives at present in unoccupied France and is working at his as yet unfinished "Outlines."

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régime and Professor Karpovitch has summarized in brief postscripts the developments during the years which have elapsed since the publication of the last Russian edition of Mr. Miliukov's work (1930-37). Besides the distinguished author's erudition, the reader will not fail to appreciate Mr. Karpovitch's editorial task which he has brilliantly fulfilled, as well as the translators' work, whose English version is excellent both in style and accuracy.

The three volumes of the "Outlines" are not only a valuable contribution to Russian History in so far as factual information is concerned. They present an analysis of the great spiritual, moral, intellectual and esthetic currents which set in motion Russia's creative energies. We behold what we might call a vast ideological panorama showing the extreme variety of these cultural trends. Both Eastern and Western influences were continually at work in Russia, which may be truly regarded as an intricate *Eurasian* world. These influences often contradicted each other, yet sometimes they ran along parallel lines, or even merged for a time, only to diverge again. Hence a series of dramatic conflicts and, at times, baffling paradoxes, one of which is the Soviet régime itself—born of the elemental upheaval of the masses, molded by a doctrine of foreign origin, pursuing an internationalistic ideal, and finally adopting a policy which Mr. Miliukov justly defines as "nationalistic imperialism."

In the volume of the "Outlines" devoted to religion, the author shows us the primary sources of Russian culture—the Byzantine Christian civilization. Mr. Miliukov stresses the point that Byzantine influences are considered by certain Russian thinkers (as for instance Khomiakov and the other Slavophiles) as Russia's greatest asset and the secret of her creative genius, while others (like Tchaadaiev and Soloviev) looked upon these influences as corrupt and destructive. Mr. Miliukov himself shares neither point of view, and we must admit that the learned author's conclusions on that particular subject cause us a certain surprise. For Mr. Miliukov grants no genuine importance to Byzantine influences; he considers them inactive and superficial, because he thinks the Russian people actually did not assimilate them. In fact, he believes, that when Russia was evangelized in 990 and later developed religious life under the guidance of the Church of Constantinople, she assimilated only "the form and ritual, not the spirit and substance of Christianity." We can hardly admit with Mr. Miliukov that the essence of the Russian religious spirit is rigid formalism. Though it is true of course, that the ritual plays an important part in Russia, as in all Eastern churches, one knows enough of Russian mysticism and humanism to be able to assert that the entire trend of Russian culture is deeply imbued with the true Christian spirit.

Professor Karpovitch is quite right when he states in his foreword that "there are some . . . who will not agree with Mr. Miliukov's reading of Russian religious history." And we shall further contest the author's outlook when he shows us medieval monastic life in Russia as no more than a life of extreme and aimless ascetic rigor and self-torture, inspired by fanaticism and obscurantism. Thus for instance the "Outlines" give us a most sombre picture of the famous Kievo-Petchersky Monastery, whose monks imitated the austere ascetic exercises of the Desert Fathers, but does not allude to the outstanding fact that it was in this monastery that the first Russian chronicle

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was written by the famous Nestor. Neither do we find any mention of the enlightening influence of the other great Russian medieval monasteries from which culture sprang forth in Russia just as it did in Western Europe. Not only did these famous religious communities, such as the Serguievo-Troïtzky Monastery and its founder St. Serge of Radonej[1], bring knowledge and civilization to the most isolated regions of the vast Empire; they created the nation's spiritual unity, which resisted the onslaught of the Mongols—as it did, six centuries later, that of atheist communism.

If the author's interpretation of these momentous pages of Russian history does not satisfy us, it must be granted that the volume devoted to religion provides a considerable amount of valuable information through which we can follow the gradual formation of the Russian theocracy, of that system which the learned monk Philotheus called the Third Rome. After the Florentine Union, closely followed by the fall of Constantinople, the Russian Church considered itself the sole bearer and guardian of the pure Orthodox tradition, and the Czar its champion and defender both against the infidels and against the Latin world. But it was precisely in the seventeenth century, when the Moscovite Empire seemed to present a harmonious whole, a monolithic religious and political system, that the great schism broke out, creating a profound rift in the Russian religious conscience and forming so to say a prologue to the revolutionary movement. A gradual bureaucratization of the Church followed the suppression of the Patriarchate by Peter the Great. The study of the established Church on the eve of the Revolution, of the various sects existing in Russia and of the situation of religion under the Soviet Régime, is far more unbiased and gives a far more accurate interpretation of the facts, than that devoted to Medieval Russia.[1]

In the two other, and shorter parts, we find a remarkable series of studies on Russian literature, painting, architecture and music. The author attaches himself less to the purely esthetic value of the works he describes and to the creative power of the artist, than to the ideological trend which has inspired them. This is perhaps a correct, though incomplete, approach to Russian culture, where ideology, ethics, and the religious spirit play such an important part, especially in the case of literature. We regret that in his study of the latter, Mr. Miliukov attributes so little space to Dostoievsky and Tolstoï, and to the religious and humanist influences in these great masters, who sought—as wrote the author of Karamazoff—"with a spirit of absolute realism to find man within man."

Dealing with the plastic arts and with music, Mr. Miliukov gives us an interesting picture of the evolution of Russian painting and architecture—from the rigid

[1] See the works of the Russian historian Klioutchevsky who has given an exhaustive account of the enlightening and colonizing mission of the medieval Russian monasteries, especially in the North and on the White Sea Coast. He justly assigns an exceptional enlightening role to Saint Serge of Radonej, whose remarkable personality has recently been described in a historical novel published in Soviet Russia (by Sergei Borodin). This great Russian Saint, who in many ways resembles Saint Benedict, is venerated not only by the Orthodox, but also by Russian Catholics of Eastern rite.

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pseudo-Byzantine formalism of the early frescoes, to the vivid "idealistic" icons of Vrubel, whose spirit is so much akin to Cimabue and to Giotto; from the wooden "tent-shaped" churches and fantastic bulbs of medieval churches to the "magnificent architectural pageant" of nineteenth century Petersburg. A fine musician, Mr. Miliukov has written some excellent pages on Russian music. He shows how this music, whose inspiration is national, gradually acquired a "cosmopolitan" meaning, in so far as it conveys a message to the entire world. Thus "Tchaikovsky's Russian soul," became, according to Mr. Miliukov, a "human one understood by all mankind." These words can be applied to all that is best in Russian culture.

HELEN ISWOLSKY.

BIOGRAPHY

Fast by the Road. John Moody. Macmillan. $2.50.

THE AUTOBIOGRAPHIES of converts appeal strongly to Catholics, not only because of the goal to which the authors have been led but because of the great variety of the paths they have followed. All too rarely, however, do we hear of their experiences after their conversion, and there is often much speculation about the success or failure of an interesting writer in adjusting himself to Catholic life. Mr. Moody must have sensed the interest in a sequel to "The Long Road Home" and has described his first decade as a Catholic in this very readable book.

Converts often inspire reserve among Catholics and suspicion among Protestants. The former take for granted the things about which converts enthuse, while the latter wonder how any one in his senses could take such a step. It takes a wise and truly charitable man to make the necessary adjustments with the irreducible minimum of friction. If he succeeds in that difficult task he can be sure that he is teaching a valuable lesson to all who know him and can claim an attentive hearing from his old and new friends.

Mr. Moody's book should have a special value now. Many things have changed since he entered the Church, and the reasons which some urged against that step seem even less impressive now. The idols in the temple of materialism have been overturned by the tempest which is beating upon it and in consequence many of the worshippers there are inclined to examine the claims of the Church more carefully. Those claims should carry even greater weight when they are presented calmly and reasonably by one who understands the mentality of unbelievers very well, and is scrupulously considerate of their feelings. Catholics can learn from Mr. Moody a greater appreciation of the treasures that are theirs and a better understanding of how the Church appears to multitudes of men of good will who wander in perplexity outside the true fold. They can also learn how to persevere in the best of causes and how to be worthy and effective witnesses to the faith.

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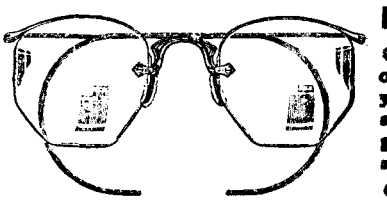

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town, not wholly successful. The man himself is more interesting than his fiction. After having tried nearly every kind of employment, including that of a paint manufacturer, he came back to that at which he was most successful—the writing of ads. Some might say that he came back to stay. But this would be unfair because it was through the writing of advertising copy that he came to learn the real usage of words and to despise the false uses to which he was always putting them. Gradually the ambition grew in him to use them to a better purpose, to respect them in themselves, and out of this came his salvation—moral, in so far as it provided him with a principle to which he sought thereafter to conform, and esthetic, to the degree his talents permitted. Just as beauty (not always, as Keats would have it) leads to truth, so an esthetic impulse may bring succor to a life that has hitherto lacked an inner integrity.

Anderson was slow to discover his vocation and the mess he made of his first marriage was part of the price he had to pay for it—the part, one fears, that cost him least. He inherited from his father a propensity to tell tall tales and himself notes that with the story-teller is wont to go an actor. Elsewhere he says: "There is something of the eternal amateur in me." It is one of the virtues of this book that it opens the eyes of one who does not know him to the genuineness of his gropings after some good that lay generally beyond his ken.

To him, after Theodore Dreiser (and excluding the poets Sandburg, Masters and Vachel Lindsay) probably belongs the primacy in that Mid-Western group who turned their backs on New England and swore to extirpate in America every vestige of the Victorian tradition. It had to be done, and they were the men to do it. Anderson's claim that he had been less influenced by any of his contemporaries than by the casual contacts he made all over the country may well be true. Yet one generally misses in his work the mark of high distinction that is needed to set off his undoubted originality.

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The Inner Forum

Youth Group in the Suburbs

TEN YEARS ago a few young Catholics met to plan an Easter Charity Ball for the benefit of St. Vincent's Hospital in Montclair, New Jersey, a large suburb fifteen miles from New York. As a result of their meeting, they decided to form a more permanent group. In October, 1932, it was agreed to name the new organization after Cardinal Mercier, "who had as a primary purpose the aim of securing a hearing for Scholastic and . . . Catholic principles . . . and was interested in social if not sociable questions too."

From the original membership of thirty the Mercier Club now has an active membership of five hundred, drawn from Montclair, Bloomfield, the Oranges, Newark and surrounding towns. Its basic philosophy remains that of its founders: "to bring together Catholic young men and women of like interests, to form groups for furthering their cultural, charitable and social activities to the end that there may be a more articulate laity," to quote the club constitution.

A visit to Glen Ridge, New Jersey, during the club season, from October to May, would reveal these groups meeting in the club rooms in a one-story brick building (formerly the Glen Ridge Post Office) opposite the Lackawanna Railroad Station. In the early days, meetings were held in the houses of the various members, but this became impractical as the organization grew. The present club rooms can accommodate hundreds. On some evenings these attractive and accessible headquarters on Darwin Place are the scene of lectures or lively informal group discussions. At times they serve as a small gallery where serious artists exhibit their sketches and drawings; at others they are transferred into the setting for a barn dance, a St. Patrick's Day social or a "gay nineties" party.

On first Friday nights a visitor to the music group meeting is likely to find the young man who is the group leader at the piano playing a difficult movement from a Beethoven sonata, or a Chopin waltz, or an aria from the Ring Cycle with a skill that is almost professional. Many in attendance there return year after year for heightened knowledge and appreciation of music. The group has been to the opera together several times; it has devoted considerable time to studying the development of musical forms. There is considerable choral and stringed instrument work. It is one of the groups within the Mercier Club that most enjoys working together.

Similar in atmosphere are the literature group meetings on the third Fridays of each month. If the short story is the subject for the evening, discussion may center around the relative merits of the pulp, the commercial and the literary types. Several outstanding modern stories of the latter type are read aloud or dramatized. Treatment of the novel may be part of a survey beginning with Robinson Crusoe and concluding with the novel of the present day. Here there may be readings, dramatizations of famous scenes, round table discussions, book reviews. Here is a group where the forty to fifty members have a chance to bring forward their enthusiasms, to discuss the books of the day, to find out for the first time about good books in many fields.

The Mercier Club always conducts some kind of religious discussion group. It may be a lecture course in ethics, a forum on apologetics, or, as at present, a Missal study group, which is being instructed by the Reverend Benedict Bradley, O.S.B. Since the return of the Mercier delegate from the National Liturgical Week at St. Paul last October, there has been an increasing demand for more knowledge of the liturgy in all its aspects.

One of the most dynamic exponents of the spirit that motivates the club is the junior group, which conducts open forums and other meetings at the club rooms on Sunday afternoons. Many of the younger members are still in college and they bring to the discussion of important current issues an encouraging indication of their grasp of sound philosophy and their ability to apply it in actual situations.

Vitally important to club life, too, is the social service group to which all Mercier members belong. True to the tradition of the heroic Belgian primate who is its exemplar, the club never keeps a large balance in the treasury. All money raised during the year by the social service unit is distributed among a number of worthy charities. The social service group has undertaken various activities: visiting hospitals and institutions, entertaining orphans, boys club work, providing food for the needy, braille work for the blind. Today in the present emergency part of the group is making altar linens for chaplains in the armed services, while another division is engaged in Red Cross work such as the making of bandages, compresses, etc.

On the social side there are many activities depending on the season—thanks to an energetic entertainment committee there are hay rides, bowling matches, soft ball games, swimming parties and woodland picnics, golf, tennis, horseback riding. There are informal parties at the club rooms and, less frequently, formal dances at hotels or golf clubs. Members of the Mercier Club both play and work together.

After ten years of independent existence the Mercier Club of Northern New Jersey has been officially recognized and became affiliated with the CYO (Catholic Youth Organization) of the Archdiocese of Newark. It hopes to share its experience with other interested Catholic youth groups.

TERESA VARNI.

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